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OCI No. 4484
Copy No. 9

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
14 June 1953

COMMENT ON CAMBODIAN KING'S FLIGHT TO THAILAND

The King of Cambodia's decision to seek "asylum" in Thailand, professedly in order to make his position better known outside his country, bring relations between France and the Associated States much closer to a crisis. Unless the French soon make some dramatic political concession, native support for the war against Communism may be irretrievably lost could even be diverted eventually to the Viet Minh.

The King, obviously dissatisfied with the limited concessions recently offered by the French, has reiterated the demand of Vietnamese Premier Tam for membership in the French Union similar in status to that of the nations of the British Commonwealth. While Tam criticized the King's flight, he undoubtedly will exploit it in pressing the French to relinquish their controls in Vietnam. Nationalist elements in all three Associated States will be stimulated by the King's decision, thus increasing the urgency already felt by Indochinese leaders to move rapidly toward complete independence.

The King's flight will emphasize in the French Assembly the need to agree quickly on a new Premier and cabinet. In view of the rapidly increasing sentiment in France for some means of relieving its burden in Indochina, it is likely that the National Assembly will now be forced to accept broader concessions to the Associated States. It is probable that for the moment France will try to delay action, however, and that direct negotiations will not be undertaken until after the July meeting of the Council of the French Union.

It is now more possible that a definite promise of independence, with dominion status and at a specific date, will be forthcoming, but greater pressure for increased US financial aid and possibly a plea for support by American troops can be expected to accompany any such concession.

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